



State of Arizona

Janice K. Brewer
Governor

Office of the Governor
1700 West Washington Street, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Main Phone: 602-542-4331
Facsimile: 602-542-7601

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 28, 2012

CONTACT: Ann Dockendorff
(602) 542-7029
adockendorff@az.gov

Statement by Governor Jan Brewer
Lowering Flags for a Fallen Soldier

"My heart aches as we learn that an Arizona soldier this week lost his life in the line of duty. Army Staff Sgt. Orion N. Sparks, 29, of Tucson, was killed Wednesday in Logar Province, Afghanistan, when an insurgent wearing a suicide vest detonated the device near Staff Sgt. Sparks' dismounted patrol. A second American serviceman was also killed in the attack: Sgt. Jonathan A. Gollnitz, 28, of Lakehurst, N.J.

"Staff Sgt. Sparks was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was assigned to the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, and based in Schweinfurt, Germany. Please join me in extending Arizona's sincerest condolences and prayers for the families and loved ones of both Staff Sgt. Sparks and Sgt. Gollnitz.

"As always, let us keep close to our hearts each of the uniformed men and women who defend our Nation on American soil and abroad. We can never repay these heroes for their service and sacrifice. May we offer our deepest gratitude and respect so that they always feel our heartfelt appreciation for all that they do to keep us safe and our Nation free.

"In honor of Arizona's fallen hero – Staff Sgt. Orion N. Sparks – I have ordered that flags at all State buildings be flown at half-staff today, September 28, from sunrise to sunset. State flags will again be lowered on the day of his interment, for which services are pending."

###